

Spicy Organic Names Annatto the Natural Answer to FDA's Synthetic Dye Phase-Out

With Red 40, Yellow 5 and Yellow 6 leaving U.S. food by the end of 2026, Spicy Organic spotlights annatto, a plant-based color cooks have used for centuries.

MCKINNEY, TX, UNITED STATES, October 26, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration's plan to phase out petroleum-based synthetic food dyes, including Red 40, Yellow 5 and Yellow 6, by the end of 2026 is now about two months from its target date. Spicy Organic, a USDA Certified Organic spice company in McKinney, Texas, says the most practical natural alternative for warm yellow, orange and red color is already in the spice aisle: annatto.



The infographic is split into two vertical panels. The left panel has a dark grey background and lists six synthetic dyes being phased out: Red 40, Yellow 5, Yellow 6, Green 3, Blue 1, and Blue 2. The right panel has an orange background and promotes Annatto as 'THE NATURAL SWAP'. It identifies Annatto as 'achiote · Bixa orellana', a plant-based golden-orange color used for centuries, and notes it is USDA Certified Organic. The website SpicyOrganic.com is listed at the bottom right.

FDA PHASE-OUT · END OF 2026

Six synthetic dyes are leaving U.S. food

Red 40 — Yellow 5 — Yellow 6
Green 3 — Blue 1 — Blue 2

THE NATURAL SWAP

Annatto

achiote · Bixa orellana

Plant-based golden-orange color, used in kitchens for centuries. USDA Certified Organic.

SpicyOrganic.com

Six synthetic dyes leave U.S. food by end of 2026. Annatto is a plant-based alternative already approved for use.

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Annatto has colored food naturally for centuries. The FDA deadline is catching the rest of the industry up to where clean-label cooks already are.”

Sunil Kumar, Founder, Spicy Organic

Annatto comes from the seeds of the achiote tree (*Bixa orellana*). Its natural pigments, bixin and norbixin, have given cheddar cheese, butter and many Latin American dishes their golden-orange color for generations. Annatto is already listed by the FDA as an approved color additive, so home cooks and food makers do not need to wait for new approvals to use it.

What the FDA Is Phasing Out

On April 22, 2025, the FDA and the Department of Health and Human Services announced a plan to remove six

synthetic dyes from the U.S. food supply by the end of 2026: FD&C Red No. 40, Yellow No. 5, Yellow No. 6, Green No. 3, Blue No. 1 and Blue No. 2. The agency also asked companies to remove Red No. 3 sooner than its original deadline and began revoking authorization for Citrus Red No. 2 and Orange B.

"Today, the FDA is asking food companies to substitute petrochemical dyes with natural ingredients for American children as they already do in Europe and Canada," FDA

Commissioner Marty Makary said in the announcement. The agency also said it would speed up its review of new natural colors such as butterfly pea flower extract, gardenia blue and calcium phosphate.

Food makers are now reformulating familiar snacks, cereals, candies and drinks. For shoppers, that means ingredient labels are changing, and many people are reading them more closely than before.

Why Annatto Fits the Moment

"Annatto has colored food naturally for centuries," said Sunil Kumar, Founder of Spicy Organic. "The FDA deadline is catching the rest of the industry up to where clean-label cooks already are. You don't need a lab to get that golden color. You need a seed that's been in Latin American kitchens for hundreds of years."

In the kitchen, annatto is easy to use. Whole seeds are gently warmed in oil or lard to make achiote oil, a deep orange base for rice, beans and braised meats. Ground annatto stirs straight into rubs, marinades, soups and doughs. It is the color behind Yucatecan cochinita pibil, Puerto Rican arroz con gandules and Filipino kare-kare, and it lends a mild, earthy, slightly peppery note.

Spicy Organic offers [USDA Certified Organic Annatto Seeds](#) and [Organic Annatto Ground](#), both certified under USDA Organic Certificate No. 0847519 through the Texas Department of Agriculture. Both are non-GMO, vegan and kosher. They are available at SpicyOrganic.com, and Spicy Organic products are stocked at seven H-E-B stores across Dallas-Fort Worth: two in McKinney, plus Allen, Frisco, Prosper, Fort Worth and Irving.

Home cooks who want to learn more can read the brand's guide, *Annatto: The Natural Food Coloring Everyone's About to Discover*, which covers flavor, substitution ratios and recipes.



ANNATTO IN THE KITCHEN

Whole seeds, centuries of natural color

Achiote oil Warm seeds in oil for a deep orange cooking base

Rice & beans Golden color for arroz con gandules and more

Braises The classic color of cochinita pibil

USDA Certified Organic · SpicyOrganic.com

Spicy Organic USDA Certified Organic Annatto Seeds, the base for achiote oil, rice and braises.

THE NATURAL SWAP

Golden-orange color, no petroleum dyes

Yellow 5 & Yellow 6 → **Annatto**

Stir ground annatto into rubs, marinades, soups and doughs.

USDA Certified Organic · Vegan · SpicyOrganic.com



Ground annatto offers natural golden-orange color in place of Yellow 5 and Yellow 6.

Frequently Asked Questions

Which food dyes is the FDA phasing out by the end of 2026?

Six petroleum-based dyes: Red 40, Yellow 5, Yellow 6, Green 3, Blue 1 and Blue 2. The FDA also asked companies to remove Red 3 early and is revoking Citrus Red No. 2 and Orange B.

What is a natural alternative to Red 40 and Yellow 5?

For yellow, orange and red-orange shades, annatto is one of the most widely used natural options. Other plant-based colors include beet, paprika, turmeric and purple sweet potato.

Is annatto approved by the FDA?

Yes. Annatto extract is listed by the FDA as a color additive exempt from certification and has been used in U.S. foods such as cheese and butter for decades.

Where can I buy organic annatto?

USDA Certified Organic Annatto Seeds and Organic Annatto Ground are available at SpicyOrganic.com.

About Spicy Organic

Spicy Organic is a family-owned, USDA Certified Organic spice company based in McKinney, Texas. It offers more than 40 organic spices, herbs, superfoods and blends, all non-GMO, vegan and kosher, at SpicyOrganic.com and at H-E-B stores across North Texas.

Media Contact

Sunil Kumar

Spicy Organic LLC

Sunil.Kumar@spicyorganic.com

866-256-6772

sunil kumar

Spicy Organic LLC

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